



Delta Regional Authority Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity
DeltaCorps – A Program of AmeriCorps and the Delta Regional Authority

Federal Agency Name: Delta Regional Authority
Funding Opportunity Title: DeltaCorps: A Program of AmeriCorps and the
Delta Regional Authority
Agreements Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Important Dates

- Notices of Intent to Apply are due **Friday, April 28, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.** Central Time. To submit a Notice of Intent, please see the DRA Website: www.dra.gov/deltacorps
- DeltaCorps Applications are due **Friday, May 12, 2017 at 5:00 pm. Partial application submissions will not be accepted.**
- Applications will undergo an internal and external six- to eight-week review process. Awards will be made in July 2017 for September 2017 DeltaCorps member placements.
- **Disclosure:** Publication of this Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (NOFO) does not obligate the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) to award any specific number of awards or to obligate any particular amount of funding.

FULL TEXT OF NOTICE

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- A. Purpose of DeltaCorps: A Program of AmeriCorps and the Delta Regional Authority ("DeltaCorps") Funding

AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) that engages more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country.

Since the program's founding in 1994, more than 900,000 AmeriCorps members have contributed more than 1.2 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve.

DRA works to improve regional economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region. DRA is comprised of the Federal Co-Chairman who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and the governors of the eight states (AL, AR, IL, KY, LA, MO, MS, TN). DRA fosters local and regional partnerships that address economic and social challenges to ultimately strengthen the Delta economy and the quality of life for Delta residents.

Established in 2000 by Congress, DRA makes strategic investments of federal appropriations into the physical and human infrastructure of Delta communities. DRA supports job creation and economic development through innovative approaches to growing local and regional leadership, increasing access to quality healthcare, and boosting opportunities for entrepreneurs to obtain affordable capital.

The area served by DRA makes up one of the most distressed areas of the country. DRA is poised to work with local, state, and federal leaders to bring additional service support to the Delta region. DRA initiatives have led to the creation of programs that bolster Delta communities and provide needed services and resources. Program support at DRA comes from the Delta Leadership Institute and the Delta Leadership Network, both of which have been instrumental in creating DeltaCorps.

DeltaCorps functions as an AmeriCorps National program, created by a federal memorandum of understanding between DRA and CNCS in July 2016. The broad vision for DeltaCorps is to advance economic opportunities in communities across the nation using unique service solutions developed at a grassroots level.

The mission of DeltaCorps is to engage residents in service to improve economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the eight-state Delta region. DeltaCorps members will serve with nonprofit organizations that have already distinguished themselves as powerful catalysts for change in the Delta, utilizing a diverse portfolio of proven program models that develop economic opportunity through the focus areas identified by CNCS: healthy futures, disaster services, environmental stewardship,

education, veterans and military families, and economic opportunity. DeltaCorps adds capacity and people power to successful Delta-developed assets, allowing them to expand and reach into traditionally underserved communities. Through DeltaCorps, DRA elevates the ethic of service and civic engagement throughout the Delta region with the dual focus on both members' positive impact in their organizations and communities and on members' own growth and development as leaders in the Delta.

DeltaCorps is a force-multiplying vehicle for national service throughout the Delta, impacting communities by providing much needed "boots on the ground" to combat the symptoms of poverty and the lack in infrastructure to support needed programming and resources. DeltaCorps adds crucial people power to underserved regions, allowing agencies and communities across the Delta to take advantage of a resource that will help them move the needle out of poverty and overcome barriers that may exist within their own communities.

DeltaCorps members will also be considered AmeriCorps members and can serve in similar capacities to other AmeriCorps members serving through their operating site organizations while being placed at unique service locations in the DRA region.

Key DeltaCorps Terminology

High-performing nonprofit organizations: 1) well-run and financially healthy with capable leadership, clear goals, and objectives; 2) diligently collect quality data and use this data to understand which of their efforts work and which do not; and 3) use this knowledge to make adjustments to their approach to continuously improve.

Delta Region: 252 counties and parishes spanning the eight states (AL, AR, IL, KY, LA, MO, MS, TN) that make up the Delta Regional Authority's footprint. All DeltaCorps service locations must be within the Delta Regional Authority service area.

Force Multiplier: DeltaCorps can compound the effectiveness of successful national service models by expanding those programs to reach additional communities throughout the Delta region. DeltaCorps member duties must not duplicate or replicate existing AmeriCorps member service or programming.

DeltaCorps Members: DeltaCorps members are not staff members or employees. They are National Service Participants who have committed a year of their lives towards service in areas of serious community need throughout the Delta region. Members are not volunteers, as they receive a living stipend throughout their year and an education award at the successful completion of their service.

Operating Sites: DeltaCorps operating sites are nonprofit or small governmental organizations that have distinguished themselves as powerful catalysts for change in the Delta. Although DRA welcomes applicants with current AmeriCorps programming to apply for DeltaCorps members, it is not a requirement that an applicant have hosted or been awarded AmeriCorps members in the past. Applicants are encouraged to apply for as many DeltaCorps members as they have the capacity and ability to host at their organization to serve the organizational and community need.

National Performance Measures: Standardized systems of measurement created by CNCS that help organizations to track and report data consistently on AmeriCorps members' service, impact, and experience.

Service: Service is the time that DeltaCorps members contribute to their communities, helping others, and meeting vital needs for the Delta region via their operating sites and approved member position descriptions. Service is a form of organized civil volunteerism, not to be confused with "work", which broadly describes salaried or hourly-paid positions offered. Only service aligning with the approved member position description, the DeltaCorps Operating Site MOU, and the MOU between DRA and CNCS will count towards AmeriCorps service.

B. Funding Priorities

The primary lens for DeltaCorps members' service is through **Economic Opportunity and Workforce Development**. In addition to addressing one or more of the below focus areas, which is a mandatory requirement, DRA is particularly interested in supporting applications that propose to include at least one objective from the Economic Opportunity focus area.

Three points will be assigned for addressing the Economic Opportunity and Workforce Development priority, and high scoring applications that address it are more likely to be recommended for funding than those that do not. In order to receive priority consideration as well as the points allotted for this designation, applicants must demonstrate that the Economic Opportunity priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes, and that the application includes a high-quality program design. Applicants proposing programs that receive priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

C. Performance Measurement

Applicants will be required to use the National Performance Measures utilized by CNCS to assess progress. Applicants should expect to work with DRA to finalize the performance measures they will use, which may include some standardized measures to help capture data related to all the service completed by DeltaCorps members. For a full list of the 2017 National Performance Measures, please see the CNCS website: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/documents/main-menu/2016/2017-performance-measures-instructions>

All applicants must select at least ONE focus area and choose at least ONE ALIGNED performance measure (Output and Outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary service activity. DRA does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. DRA values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures. Applicants should complete the provided performance measure worksheet (ATTACHMENT 1) for the aligned performance measure (Output and Outcome) selected. This worksheet does not count towards the overall page total for the application.

Applicants must chose at least one of the focus areas identified below:

Economic Opportunity Focus Area: DRA creates economic opportunity by using national service to improve the financial well-being and security of economically disadvantaged individuals. DRA specifically focuses on community organizations across the Delta Region that implement specific interventions to address the housing, financial literacy, and employment needs of low-income populations. Projects will support attainment of job skills, securing employment for economically disadvantaged individuals, as well as securing individual resources that lead to an employed workforce.

Environmental Stewardship Focus Area: DRA partners with community organizations and the national service network to mobilize citizens and volunteers to promote environmental stewardship. Through national service, we can train our youth and unemployed and underemployed citizens for conservation and “green” jobs, reconnect Americans to the outdoors, build an ethic of environmental stewardship, and support successful science-based conservation strategies. Projects will address environmental stewardship in schools, community organizations, and municipalities that address public transportation, recycling efforts, and weatherization.

Education Focus Area: DRA believes that all students can succeed when given

resources, opportunities, and support, and through the Education Focus Area of Deltacorps, DRA works to create the conditions that make children and youth want to learn, and give them the opportunity to achieve. In order for all of our students to succeed, the education system must provide the academic support and encouragement at-risk children need to thrive. Too many at-risk students enter school unprepared, making it more difficult for them to keep pace with their peers. Through national service, we can have a definitive impact on the attainment and access to a quality education, creating a knowledgeable, competent future workforce. Projects will focus on improving literacy/math skills, attaining high school diplomas, as well as improving attitudes towards education.

Healthy Futures Focus Area: To improve the physical and mental health of communities and individuals, with an emphasis on partnerships and programs that create access to healthcare and that support improving health outcomes for all individuals. Projects will improve access to and utilization of primary and preventive health care.

Veterans and Military Families Focus Area: To support or improve the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of veterans and military families. Projects will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength by increasing the number of veterans served and the number of veterans engaged in service. DRA is especially supportive of projects that engage veterans to serve other veterans.

Disaster Services Focus Area: To focus on enhancing and adding value to what already exists in communities and infrastructure, working in partnership with state service commissions, local governments, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations. Projects may support response to active disasters, as well as recovery after them, always focused towards enhancing the resilience of community infrastructure and building back communities that are better prepared for future disasters.

D. Key Program Requirements

i. **Match**

All operating sites are required to contribute a cash match following the successful signing of an operating site agreement between DRA and their organization. The universal amount for all awardees is \$2,000.00 per DeltaCorps member position.

Operating sites will use this cash match towards the living allowance for DeltaCorps members. Each month Operating sites will submit an invoice to DRA for the monthly cost of living allowance, health insurance, and criminal history checks, which are the only reimbursable amounts approved by DRA towards the DeltaCorps member placements. Full details on the cash match, refilling a member slot, and member retention will be addressed in the operating site agreement with organizations.

ii. Corps Member Selection and Recruitment

The responsibility for member recruitment for DeltaCorps members lies fully with awardees of the program. All operating sites must conduct a search for appropriate candidates for their awarded DeltaCorps positions. If the operating site is a pre-existing AmeriCorps awardee, the recruitment process for DeltaCorps members may draw from the same pool as their existing program.

DRA will provide overall support in the form of general announcements publicizing the availability of member positions throughout the eight-state Delta region. DRA will establish DeltaCorps member listings on my.americorps.gov as well as the service year recruitment website, Service Year Exchange, to support member recruitment. DRA will additionally forward any interested applicants or organizations information pertaining to DeltaCorps, as well as DeltaCorps-awarded operating sites and/or service locations.

The primary goals of the member selection process are to find a good fit for the member and the operating site and to ensure a fair and equitable member selection process by demonstrating a consistent application process followed for each applicant.

Please note that programs cannot discriminate based on race, color, disability, family status, sexual orientation, gender, religion, national origin, birthplace, political affiliation, or age. Qualified individuals with disabilities and those from diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Operating sites are expected to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals and make every effort to conduct all activities in accessible settings.

Operating sites should be advertising a DeltaCorps position, not a job, and be using the language of “service,” instead of “work.” Detailed screening and selection that makes sure candidates understand and can take on the commitments of their service position are crucial to setting members up for a successful year.

Member Application Process

DeltaCorps awardees are expected to utilize their own processes for recruiting, interviewing, accepting, reviewing, and screening potential DeltaCorps member applications. All DeltaCorps members are expected to meet all AmeriCorps eligibility requirements, including the citizenship requirement and all required components of the National Service Criminal History Check. Please see page 23-24 for NSCHC requirements.

DRA requires that all DeltaCorps operating sites provide them with samples of any member recruitment posting used by their organization, as well as a blank application for the DeltaCorps position. All position descriptions will need to be approved by DRA before a member is to begin service. DRA requires that updated versions of these documents be provided each year to ensure that new DeltaCorps members are being recruited with the level of scrutiny required by CNCS.

iii. Growing Impact of Program Models

All successful applications should convey how DeltaCorps members' activities are to achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by the organization. Overall, DeltaCorps programming should achieve the following through the direct service members engage in:

- Support or enhance the program delivery model;
- Respond to the organization's goal of increasing, expanding, or enhancing services in order to address the most pressing needs identified in the community; and
- Enable the organization to provide a sustained level of more, or better, direct services after the member's term of service has ended.

DeltaCorps members are expected to support the growth of the programs they serve. The impact of programs may be grown in several ways, including through expansion of existing program sites or replication of the program to new sites in different communities within the DRA service area. However, all strategies should involve expanding the selected interventions so that more people in low-income communities derive substantial, measurable benefits.

Performance Measure Data Entry

Operating sites must use the DeltaCorps OnCorps online management platform for member timesheets, as well as to capture required performance measurement data and complete quarterly progress reports. Sites must be able to collect and report data for both the standardized performance measures and any program-specific

performance measures for DeltaCorps members' service exclusively.

All DeltaCorps programs must report data for an aligned, national performance measure in the specific chosen focus area (economic opportunity, education, healthy futures, etc.)

II. Federal Award Information

A. Estimated Available Funds

DRA expects a highly competitive DeltaCorps award competition. DRA reserves the right to prioritize funding to existing awards before making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations. DRA will make cost-reimbursement awards for DeltaCorps member slots at an operating site. More information on this can be found in the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section of this NOFO.

- B. Estimated Award Amount \$17,500.00 Per Slot (Plus \$2000.00 Required Match from operating site)**
- C. Project Period: Awards will be made for one year, September 2017 – August 2018, with reapplication annually.**

The funding mechanism for DeltaCorps is a cooperative agreement, which provides for substantial programmatic involvement by DRA with the operating sites as the approved award activities are implemented. The DeltaCorps Program Manager will confer with the operating site on a regular and frequent basis to develop or review service delivery and project status, including work plans, budgets, periodic reports, evaluations, as well as programmatic and financial monitoring of contractors, sub recipients and partners, etc. In particular, DRA anticipates having substantial involvement in:

- Setting parameters for DeltaCorps member selection;
- Developing and approving DeltaCorps member selection plans;
- Reviewing prospective DeltaCorps members and incoming levels of data associated with DeltaCorps interventions;
- Developing, approving, and monitoring the implementation of DeltaCorps members' service;
- Developing and approving DeltaCorps member growth plans; and
- Documenting and sharing lessons learned through a DRA-sponsored learning community.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

All prospective operating sites must meet a certain set of eligibility requirements to qualify as DeltaCorps awardees. The following is a list of those requirements:

- Be a nonprofit 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 organization, foundation, school, institution of higher learning, or government agency operating in the eight-state Delta region. All for-profit business and other organizational designations are excluded;
- Have the ability to host, supervise, and support DeltaCorps members;
- Have the ability to supply matching funds at \$2,000 per DeltaCorps member; and
- Have the ability to provide and pay for an Independent Financial Audit or an IRS 990 attesting to the financial solvency of the organization.

In addition, all prospective operating sites should be able to meet the following conditions:

- The organization must have a documented unmet need that cannot be reached by their current AmeriCorps member allotment, if applicable, or volunteer base that the DeltaCorps member would fill. This is important because DeltaCorps can be used to add additional AmeriCorps members to current national service awardees, expanding their portfolio to meet challenges and needs that their current awards cannot reach.
- The proposed assignment may not displace or duplicate staff or volunteers at the organization. By law, members may not under any circumstances perform services, duties, or activities that had been assigned to a current employee or to an employee who has recently resigned or has been discharged.
- The proposed DeltaCorps project must meet vital needs targeted towards one of the required focus areas.
- The proposed DeltaCorps project should include a well-developed strategy for recruiting quality DeltaCorps participants.
- Each organization will need to contribute a cash match per member. Special exceptions to this required match are considered by DRA after formal written request, on a case-by-case basis as directed in the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section of the application.

DRA is soliciting competitive proposals because it has determined that this process best serves the needs and interests of DRA and the public. No institution or person shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, citizenship status, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, weight, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, or any other factor protected by law in consideration for an award issued pursuant to this

NOFO. DRA is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and the elimination of all vestiges of discriminatory practices that might exist.

DeltaCorps State Minimums

A minimum of two DeltaCorps member positions are reserved to be assigned to operating sites in each of the eight Delta states. Multiple operating sites can be awarded in each state.

Pre-existing AmeriCorps Awardees

Ideal awardees of DeltaCorps are organizations with a track record of success, which will be selected to expand upon evidence-based models that successfully utilize national service to meet the country's most pressing needs.

Ideal awardees are also organizations that are unable to apply for AmeriCorps programming due to required match amounts (24%) or required member slots (6-20 members).

Awardees who currently host AmeriCorps members or an AmeriCorps program should design a strategy for DeltaCorps members to be integrated holistically into the pre-existing cohort of AmeriCorps members, while allowing DeltaCorps members to be managed separately from other AmeriCorps members in terms of tracking performance measurement data, timesheets, invoice reimbursements, and progress reports.

Operating Site Expectations

DeltaCorps operating sites are expected to meet high standards to create a positive environment for members to complete their service successfully. There are specific requirements for operating sites that are awarded DeltaCorps members.

All DeltaCorps members' duties and activities must be designed to be AmeriCorps-eligible and approved by DRA. As a federal program, AmeriCorps has specific requirements and prohibited activities. Please take time to fully understand the requirements of the DeltaCorps and AmeriCorps program before managing a member. Please see the link at the [CNCS website](#) for more information.

To ensure that their program complies with the required criteria, applicants should:

- Complete the DeltaCorps Operating Site MOU once per year. This agreement clearly delineates the expectations set between DRA and partner organizations. (Annual renewal will be pending DRA appropriations, member positions awarded via CNCS, as well as a review of operating site

performance.)

- Participate in all DeltaCorps operating site trainings.
- Approve member's time logs monthly.
- Verify that member service hours do not include prohibited activities. Members may participate in these activities as private citizens on non-DeltaCorps time and should not identify with the DeltaCorps program. Please see the link for [prohibited activities](#) at the CNCS website.
- Complete all mid-term and end-of-term member evaluations for submission to DRA staff.
- Acknowledge DeltaCorps and DRA in all promotional and educational materials that pertain to their DeltaCorps project(s).

Display the DeltaCorps logo provided to them by DRA in general and at any events supported by the DeltaCorps partnership or members. This also includes, but is not limited to: special event invitations and speaking programs, promotional flyers, posters, pamphlets, event signage and printed programs, newsletters, web sites, videos, media interviews and events, press releases and advertisements, member clothing and gear, etc. We strongly encourage operating sites to co-brand AmeriCorps, DeltaCorps, and DRA with appropriate signage.

- Mention the mission of DeltaCorps and explain that the program is an AmeriCorps program administered by DRA in all media and external communication publicizing service member activities.
- Support members to complete their service commitment and 1700 hours. Except in compelling personal circumstances, members who leave the program early forfeit their education award.
- Ensure that all members attend required DeltaCorps events and required CNCS endorsed national service events. Periodically throughout the year, there may be DRA or CNCS sponsored events in specific states or regions such as National Volunteer Week, Make a Difference Day, or Martin Luther King Day. Additionally, there will be trainings and regional Corps meet-ups for DeltaCorps members. Please ensure that DeltaCorps members are supported in participating in these events.

DRA's relationship with AmeriCorps and CNCS is an important aspect of the DeltaCorps program and support in reaching compliance is appreciated.

B. Other Requirements

Requirements to be Compliant for Review

In order for an application to be reviewed, the applicant must:

- Be an eligible organization (See pg. 13);
- Submit an application and required documentation; and
- Submit an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and additional documents as well as follows the instructions provided in this NOFO.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Please adhere to the following guidelines in submitting DeltaCorps applications:

- Applications must be received by DRA staff as an email attachment meeting the submission requirements detailed in this NOFO. Applications not meeting these formatting guidelines will not be considered for review.
- All applications must be sent to apinckard-hale@dra.gov.
- Proposal narrative must be doubled-spaced and in 12-point font and may not exceed sixteen pages. Use one-inch margins. Budgets, organizational charts, letters of financial commitments towards match, and performance measurement worksheets are not included in the total proposal page count. Any narrative beyond the sixteen-page limit will not be reviewed.
- Do not submit tables, charts, pictures, or articles. Please do not use italics, bold, or any other text formatting.
- The whole application must be submitted as a single PDF file.
- All costs of preparation of responses to this Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity (NOFO) are the sole responsibility of responders and DRA will not be obligated to reimburse any such costs.
- DRA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. DRA reserves the right to award the contract to the respondent best suited to fulfill the contract deliverables. DRA reserves the right to decline to award a contract from this NOFO.

A. Submission Date and Time

i. Notification of Intent to Apply

Notifications of Intent to Apply are due **Friday, April 28, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.** To submit a Notice of Intent, please see the DRA website: www.dra.gov/deltacorps

ii. Application Submission Deadline

Applications will be reviewed beginning **May 12, 2017**.

Award notifications are expected to be given by July 2017, after a six to eight week period of community review, internal review, and clarification.

B. Other Submission Guidelines

Prospective respondents will have the opportunity to submit written questions via email to clarify any uncertainties that may exist. All questions must be submitted via email to apinckard-hale@dra.gov. All questions shall be marked “DRA NOFO DELTACORPS” in the email subject line.

In order to provide equal treatment of respondents, all questions and corresponding answers will be posted on the [DRA website](#).

i. **Submission of Additional Documents**

By the application submission deadline, applicants are required to demonstrate through a letter or other form of documentation that they have either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting the matching requirement of \$2,000 per member.

Applicants may demonstrate cash-on-hand by a statement from the Chief Financial Officer or other officer that the organization has established a reserve of otherwise uncommitted funds for the purposes of hosting DeltaCorps members. A bank statement or report of assets is not sufficient without the accompanying statement that the funds are uncommitted. Applicants may also demonstrate commitments by a dated and signed letter from each donor/foundation, indicating the amount of funds committed for the specific use of supporting DeltaCorps members. Such a letter must contain a firm commitment to provide the applicant the stated funding upon award of a DeltaCorps member slots. This documentation must be emailed to apinckard-hale@dra.gov with the following subject line: **DeltaCorps Additional Documents – [Name of Applicant]**.

Do not submit supplementary material such as videos, brochures, or any items not requested in this NOFO. DRA will not review or return them.

The submitted DeltaCorps application should include the following documents:

- Narrative not to exceed 16 pages addressing the points outlined in the Criteria section of this NOFO
- Organizational Chart
- Budget Worksheet

- Performance Measurement Worksheet
- Match Commitment Letter

V. Application Review Information

Applications must provide a well-designed plan with clear and compelling justification for receiving DRA funds to support DeltaCorps member(s).. Reviewers will assess applications against the selection criteria below and rate them accordingly, so it is important that sufficiently detailed responses to each criterion are provided. Understanding the key program requirements, as described earlier in this NOFO will help develop a competitive grant application.

A. Criteria

Each of the Categories/Subcategories in the table below should be the titles of the sections where criteria in that category is addressed in the submitted application narrative. Deviations from this format will require clarifications and corrections.

<u>Categories/Subcategories</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Executive Summary	0%
Organizational & Community Need	10%
Project Description	40%
Organizational Background	20%
Member Training and Recruitment	20%
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	10%

i. **Application Executive Summary (0% of Evaluated Proposal)**

Please title this section in the submitted application narrative as Executive Summary and include information in the paragraph below only. Deviations from this format will require clarifications and corrections.

The executive summary should follow the template below:

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] DeltaCorps members who will [what the members will be doing] in [the locations the DeltaCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the DeltaCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the DeltaCorps members will leverage an additional [number of

leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing.] This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)]. The [Name of the organization] will provide the required match of \$[amount of projected match], from \$[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

ii. Organizational & Community Need (10% of Evaluated Proposal)

Please title this section in the submitted application narrative as Organizational and Community Need and include information indicated below only. Deviations from this format will require clarifications and corrections.

Describe in detail the full extent of community needs that will be met through the DeltaCorps program. Provide compelling factual data, reinforced by known and respected studies and research, to provide an accurate and complete representation of the needs that DeltaCorps members will be addressing. DeltaCorps is a force multiplying tool for organizations that are already accomplishing excellent results in the Delta, so make sure this section explains how DeltaCorps members will expand and extrapolate from the successes of the current model, filling service gaps that would not be possible without this award. Please expand on the following items:

- How does this position target an identified need in the organization?
- How will this project meet the needs of people in the community and the Delta region at large? Describe these needs in detail.
- Tell us about the demographics of the community in which the DeltaCorps member will be serving.
- What geographic area will members serve in? Please indicate the DRA service area specifically.
- Indicate the focus area selected.
- What is the organization currently doing to address this specific need?
- Why are DeltaCorps members the solution to these specific needs?

iii. Project Description (40% of Evaluated Proposal)

Please title this section in the submitted application narrative as Project Description and include information indicated below only. Deviations from this format will require clarifications and corrections.

The following questions are meant to help the organization describe the details of the project, and how DeltaCorps will be used as a force multiplying resource for the program model to reach previously underserved communities.

General Program Outline:

- Describe the service activities that DeltaCorps members will perform, and how those relate to the project focus area and the expected outcomes. Highlight the ways in which AmeriCorps members are currently being utilized in the organization and how DeltaCorps builds upon that framework, if applicable.
- What are the measurable objectives of the project? Include specifics on how communities will be impacted by this project.
- How will this project ensure the DeltaCorps members will serve a minimum of 1700 hours of programming, providing for an adequate workload?

Project Timeline:

- Describe the DeltaCorps members' schedule, including how and when the members would be serving.
- Provide a quarterly timeline of how and when the project will be accomplished including activities and benchmarks. Keep in mind that the DeltaCorps member will be serving from Sept 2017 - August 2018.

Project Impact and Outcomes:

- Describe the anticipated impact of DeltaCorps on the organization's direct services and on the communities served.
- How will the organization monitor progress towards performance measure outcomes and evaluate the success of the project? Please describe methods for collecting data, evaluating data, and making adjustments as necessary.
- Complete the Performance Measure Worksheet.
- Applicants should provide rationale for selecting output and outcome targets. Note, applicants applying for renewal of DeltaCorps programming proposing to significantly increase or decrease output and outcome targets from their previous grant award must provide a justification for this change.

Project Vision and Sustainability:

- How will the DeltaCorps member project build capacity for the project, leaving a lasting impact on the organization and community for this year and beyond? How will this project be successful beyond their year of service?
- How is the overall organization committed to this project? Please provide

evidence of this commitment.

- Discuss lessons learned from any current AmeriCorps programming, including project successes and challenges, if applicable.

iv. Organizational Background (10% of Evaluated Proposal)

Please title this section in the submitted application narrative as Organizational Background and include information indicated below only. Deviations from this format will require clarifications and corrections.

This section of the proposal shall contain information regarding the respondent's organizational background including size and resources, financial standing, and involvement in litigation. Also, please include highlights enumerating experience with projects similar to the ones presented in this NOFO. Provide a clear and concise description of the organization and its interest in hosting DeltaCorps members by answering the following in detail:

- What is the organization's mission?
- What are the organization's major programs and services?
- When was the organization established, and how has it expanded and sustained itself in that time? What is the total number of employees?
- Describe how the organization has the experience, staffing, and management structure to plan and implement the proposed program.
- Is the organization a current or former AmeriCorps State and National, or AmeriCorps VISTA operating site? If so, please describe this programming.
- How will DeltaCorps members fit within the framework and culture of the organization, specifically in regards to training, esprit de corps, and timeline of service?
- Describe how the organization will be compliant with DRA's policies and procedures, including evaluation and reporting, communication, and financial compliance.

Compliance and Accountability:

- Describe how the organization, in implementation and management of the DeltaCorps program, will prevent and detect compliance issues.
- Describe how the organization will hold itself, host sites, and service site locations (if applicable) accountable if instances of risk or noncompliance are identified.

- Describe how the organization will comply with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities at the operating site, host site, and service site locations (if applicable).
- Describe how the DeltaCorps members' service will not duplicate, displace, or supplant volunteers, staff and/or interns.
- Describe staff member's relevant experience in successfully managing state, federal, or foundation (or national service) awards.
- Please provide a full organizational chart as an additional document to the application submission illustrating how the implementation of DeltaCorps members fits into the overall scope of the organization.

In this section, the applicant may include the following information:

- Evidence of the applicant's qualifications and credentials in terms of proven successful experience in managing AmeriCorps programming or similar programming;
- Evidence of the qualifications and credentials of the applicant in terms of proven successful experience in AmeriCorps compliance, regulations, and processes; and
- Evidence of the qualifications and credentials of the applicant in terms of proven successful experience in performing research and analysis, particularly in the context of performance measurement data.

v. Member Training and Recruitment (20% of Evaluated Proposal)

Please title this section in the submitted application narrative as Member Training and Recruitment and include information indicated below only. Deviations from this format will require clarifications and corrections.

The following questions are meant to describe the overall member experience, training, and support that will be provided to DeltaCorps members. If the organization is a current AmeriCorps awardee, build off of the current model and describe if the member experience and recruitment process would differ.

Orientation and Training:

- What orientation and training will be provided to the DeltaCorps members? How will the organization ensure that the members are properly trained and supported to carry out their project ?
- What other development opportunities, support, and benefits will be provided to

the members?

Member Supervision:

- Who will supervise the members, and what is their role in the organization? How will they make time to supervise the members and manage their activities? If there will be multiple supervisors, detail this individually and note who will be the lead contact with DRA.
- What are the qualifications and background of the staff that will be supervising members?
- Describe how supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.
- How have those who will directly supervise members been involved in the development of the current AmeriCorps program and this new DeltaCorps application?
- What is the supervision plan for the DeltaCorps members? How often will members have one on one meetings with the supervisor? How often will group supervision occur?
- How will the members be introduced to and continually connected with the organization and with each other?
- Describe the physical workspace that will be provided to the members. How will members be provided with adequate workspace, supplies, and resources to be successful in their service?

Member Recruitment:

- Provide a recruitment plan for quality DeltaCorps member applicants
- How will the organization ensure that members are recruited from the geographic or demographic communities in which the program operate?

Member Experience:

- How will members gain skills and experience as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed?
- How will members have access to meaningful service experiences?

vi. Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (10% of Evaluated Proposal)

Please title this section in the submitted application narrative as Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy and include information indicated below only. Deviations from this

format will require clarifications and corrections.

The proposed budget should be sufficient to allow the organization to support the DeltaCorps member activities described in the application narrative. Reviewers will consider the budget information provided in their assessment of the project's overall cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy.

- Provide a narrative for the cost-effective and budget adequacy section attesting to the cost effectiveness of DeltaCorps members, and explaining how the budget is adequate to support members.
- Please explain items listed under "grantee share" on the Budget Worksheet, and why the organization will provide these items. Presenting a complete budget that shows the support provided by the grantee is important to see the complete picture of DeltaCorps member support.
- If the organization is requesting a waiver or reduction of the required match, please explain the rationale for this extenuating financial need.

For the purpose of this application, include a budget for the DeltaCorps program using the guidelines provided below as well as the detailed instructions and template located in Attachment 2. Please keep in mind the following guidelines in preparing the budget:

- Clearly defined and specific purposes for all amounts requested. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts. Amounts and proposed costs must be allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- All budgeted expenses that will be charged to the DRA share must be indicated as such.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).
- Do not include unallowable expenses (i.e.: entertainment costs). Food and beverage costs will only be allowed if they are justified as part of a day-long training event.
- The DRA share that an applicant may budget as reimbursable expenses to support their DeltaCorps award include: DeltaCorps Member Living Allowance, DeltaCorps Member Support Costs, including Health Insurance, FICA, Worker's Compensation, Unemployment, and Criminal History Checks.
- The acceptable "Sources" of match that an applicant may budget include cash only. Please indicate what source the cash match will come from.
- Please submit a budget with adequate information to assess how each line

item is calculated.

- The proposed budget must include a living allowance of \$12,630 for full-time members. A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage.
- Itemize each cost and present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.

B. Review and Selection Process

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of considerations. DRA will engage External and Internal (Staff) Reviewers with relevant knowledge and expertise to provide insight and input on the eligible applications. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that represent the selection factors described in this NOFO.

i. Stages in the Review Process

Informational Sessions – Informational sessions about DeltaCorps, DRA, the NOFO, funding priorities, and this application process are offered by phone, webinar, or in-person meetings on an ongoing basis. The dates for these informational sessions can be found at dra.gov/deltacorps.

Community Review - Applications received are given for review to a group of community award reviewers, consisting of volunteers active in the national service and nonprofit networks of the Delta region.

Clarification Period – DRA seeks to cultivate the most successful program models to host DeltaCorps members, as such, programs in need of additional assistance and tweaking to their application MAY be given a period of clarification where feedback is shared with the applicant allowing them to adjust the application before final submission.

DRA Internal Review – Final review and determinations on the application are made by DRA staff utilizing the feedback given during the review process, and considering resubmitted applications following the Clarification Period.

Risk Assessment Evaluation - DRA staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable.) This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this

evaluation will inform funding decisions. In evaluating risks, among other factors, DRA may consider the following:

- Financial stability
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS/DeltaCorps/DRA awards
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under OMB Circular A-133 and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website

Project Award Announcements – Successful applications and denials will be given notice by July 2017.

ii. Selection for Funding

Successful DeltaCorps operating sites applicants will be awarded the following:

- One or more full-time DeltaCorps member(s) for one year. Prospective members are recruited at the discretion of the operating site.
- Pre-service training focused on leadership, project development, Delta-centric issues, youth development, and organizational management. These trainings will also delve into the mission and strategies of the DeltaCorps throughout the Delta region.
- Ongoing training and development opportunities for the member, including up to 2 professional development opportunities, as well as multiple virtual networking opportunities. Access to some pre-approved Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy and Alumni Network trainings, lectures, and train-the-trainer courses at no charge.
- Site visits to address operating site needs and evaluate DeltaCorps members' progress and project goals.
- Access to other DeltaCorps operating site organizations and DRA awardees throughout DRA's broad network for resources, training, etc.
- DeltaCorps member benefits of ~\$12,630 annual stipend to be administered by the operating site, post-service education award, healthcare reimbursement, training opportunities, loan forbearance, and some travel allowance by

reimbursement for approved DeltaCorps travel. (All member benefits will be provided by the operating site, and reimbursable by monthly invoice by DRA. The DeltaCorps Program will operate as a cost-reimbursable project.)

- DeltaCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will receive an Education Award from the National Service Trust of \$5,815.00 for a year of full-time service, with correspondingly smaller awards for less than full-time service. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award.

C. Feedback to Applicants

Following DeltaCorps awards, compliant applicants will receive summary comments from the review. This feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect information that may have been provided during clarification.

D. Transparency in DeltaCorps Investments

DRA is committed to transparency in its investments. The following information for applications will be published on the DRA website within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- A list of all compliant applications submitted; and
- A brief program narrative summarizing successful applications.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

A. Federal Award Notices

DRA will make awards following the project selection announcement. DRA anticipates announcing the results of this competition by July 2017. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions via email. This notification is not an authorization to begin award activities. The Notice to Proceed Letter signed by the Federal Co-Chairman of DRA is the authorizing document for award activities. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive a notification that their application was not approved for funding.

An awardee may not expend federal award funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice to Proceed Award. DRA reserves the right to amend this if it is determined that pre-award costs may be necessary per CNCS guidance.

B. National Service Criminal History Check Requirements (NSCHCs)

Under the Serve America Act (SAA), all awardees must conduct National Service Criminal History checks on participants and program employees in AmeriCorps. The law requires that programs conduct three-part background check -- including FBI, statewide repository, and sex offender registry checks on individuals who will have recurring contact with vulnerable populations. All employees, participants, and others who receive a salary, national service education award, living allowance, or stipend under CNCS awards, even if the activities do not involve service with vulnerable populations, must receive the checks prior to beginning employment or service. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder.

Recipients must perform the following checks. DRA has determined that all DeltaCorps members will need to receive the three-part check as outlined below, as the potential for contact with vulnerable populations often cannot be excluded in member service.

Any national service participants must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the [National Sex Offender Public Website](#); *and*
2. *Both*
 - A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
 - A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

See 45 C.F.R. § 2540.200–§ 2540.207 and

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check> for complete information and FAQs. Vendor checks (checks performed by commercial vendors) are often noncompliant with these requirements. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, as specified in CNCS's regulations, may result in cost disallowance of all or part of the costs associated with noncompliance. Staff completing DeltaCorps members' NSCHC will be responsible for completing the [online introductory course](#) as required by AmeriCorps and CNCS.

These checks are administered by operating sites during their Corps member screening process. Selection as a DeltaCorps member is contingent upon the member's successfully clearing all three screenings. DRA will reimburse operating

sites for the costs of the three required NSCHC: state, FBI, and NSOPW for prospective DeltaCorps members.

C. Other Information

Appropriate portions of successful proposals may be incorporated into the contract between operating site and DRA and will be a matter of public record subject to disclosure under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C.A. § 552, As Amended By Public Law No. 104-231, 110 Stat. 3048.

DRA will have the right to use all ideas, or adaptations of those ideas, contained in any proposal received in response to this NOFO. Selection or rejection of the proposal will not affect this right.

DRA shall not, under any circumstances, be responsible for any cost, or expenses associated with this proposal including, but not limited to, research, investigation, development, preparation, duplication, production, collation, packaging, delivery, transmittal, or presentation of the proposal or any related information, data documentation and material. Costs for developing any proposal will be the sole responsibility of the respondent whether or not any award results from this solicitation. DRA will not provide reimbursement for such costs.

The respondent is prohibited from making multiple proposals.

DRA may withdraw or cancel this NOFO any time prior to the award of a contract. DRA may amend this NOFO by issuing a notice of amendment prior to the opening of proposals. In unusual circumstances, DRA may postpone a proposal opening in order to give sufficient time to respond to an amendment.

DRA reserves the right to request necessary amendments, reject any or all proposals received, or cancel this NOFO, according to the best interest of DRA. DRA also reserves the right to waive minor irregularities in proposals provided such action is in the best interest of DRA.

Where DRA may waive minor irregularities, such waiver shall in no way modify the NOFO requirements or excuse the respondent from full compliance with the NOFO specifications and other contract requirements if the respondent is awarded the contract.

Institutions must warrant that no sums or anything of value has been or will be paid directly or indirectly to any officer or employee of DRA such as wages, compensation,

or gifts in exchange for acting as officer, agent, employee, subcontractor, or consultant to the institutions in connection with any work compensated or performed.

DRA cannot and does not make any representations or warranties with regard to the information, data, documentation, and material conveyed in this NOFO or otherwise provided by DRA. Institutions shall conduct their own independent investigations and analysis and make their own assessments, judgments, and decisions regarding this opportunity.

Some of the contents of this NOFO and the response submitted may be incorporated by reference in any final contract resulting from this NOFO.

The contract created as a result of this NOFO and the accepted response will be made under, and shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi.

Additionally, the Board reserves the right to:

- Waive or amend any portion of this NOFO by written notice to all institutions;
- Negotiate all elements that comprise the information with the institution(s) to ensure that the best possible considerations are afforded to all concerned;
- To waive any irregularities;
- Reject any and all responses to this NOFO;
- Select institution(s) for specific purposes or for any combination of specific purposes; and
- Defer the selection of any institution(s) to a time of the Authority's choosing.

Under no circumstances shall any entity intending to respond to this NOFO contact any member of the board or DRA staff, except for Angela Pinckard-Hale, the contact person, during this NOFO process. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in immediate disqualification.

While the contract will be offered for a term of one year, with a renewal option in subsequent NOFO announcements, it is the intent to continue the contract on an ongoing basis, contingent upon, among other things, availability of funds, continued need, and satisfactory performance of services. At all times, the institution will serve at the will and pleasure of the Authority.

The Board and DRA personnel reserve the right to inspect each institution's facilities and/or program at any time without prior notice.

Any contract issued pursuant to this NOFO is not assignable, nor may be delegated, except with the prior written approval of the board.

All responses become the property of the DRA upon receipt and will not be returned to the institutions once opened. The DRA has the right to use any and all ideas or adaptations of the ideas contained in any response received in this NOFO. Selection or rejection of the response will not affect this right.

If an institution does not desire certain proprietary information in its response disclosed, the institution is required to identify all proprietary information in the response, which identification shall be submitted concurrently with the response. If the institution fails to identify proprietary information, it agrees by submission of its response that all parts of all responses shall be deemed non-proprietary and will become public documents upon completion of the NOFO process.